

23.403 Policy.

Government policy on the use of products containing recovered materials and biobased products considers cost, availability of competition, and performance. Agencies shall purchase these products or require in the acquisition of services, the delivery, use, or furnishing (see 23.103(b)) of such products. Agency contracts should specify that these products are composed of the highest percent of recovered material or biobased content practicable, or at least meet, but may exceed, the minimum recovered materials or biobased content of an EPA- or USDA-designated product. Agencies shall purchase these products to the maximum extent practicable without jeopardizing the intended use of the product while maintaining a satisfactory level of competition at a reasonable price. Such products shall meet the reasonable performance standards of the agency and be acquired competitively, in a cost-effective manner. Except as provided at 23.404(b), virgin material shall not be required by the solicitation (see 11.302).

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23.404 Agency affirmative procurement programs.

(a) An agency must establish an affirmative procurement program for EPA and USDA-designated items if the agency's purchases of designated items exceed the threshold set forth in 23.400.

(1) Agencies have a period of 1 year to revise their procurement program(s) after the designation of any new item by EPA or USDA.

(2) Technical or requirements personnel and procurement personnel are responsible for the preparation, implementation, and monitoring of affirmative procurement programs.

(3) Agency affirmative procurement programs must include—

- (i) A recovered materials and biobased products preference program;
- (ii) An agency promotion program;
- (iii) For EPA-designated items only, a program for requiring reasonable estimates, certification, and verification of recovered material used in the performance of contracts. Both the recovered material content and biobased

programs require preaward certification that the products meet EPA or USDA recommendations. A second certification is required at contract completion for recovered material content; and

(iv) Annual review and monitoring of the effectiveness of the program.

(b) *Exemptions.* (1) Agency affirmative procurement programs must require that 100 percent of purchases of EPA or USDA-designated items contain recovered material or biobased content, respectively, unless the item cannot be acquired—

(i) Competitively within a reasonable time frame;

(ii) Meeting reasonable performance standards; or

(iii) At a reasonable price.

(2) EPA and USDA may provide categorical exemptions for items that they designate, when procured for a specific purpose. For example, all USDA-designated items (see 7 CFR 3201.3(e)) are exempt from the preferred procurement requirement for the following:

(i) Spacecraft system and launch support equipment.

(ii) Military equipment, *i.e.*, a product or system designed or procured for combat or combat-related missions.

(c) Agency affirmative procurement programs must provide guidance for purchases of EPA-designated items at or below the micro-purchase threshold.

(d) Agencies may use their own specifications or commercial product descriptions when procuring products containing recovered materials or biobased products. When using either, the contract should specify—

(1) For products containing recovered materials, that the product is composed of the—

(i) Highest percent of recovered materials practicable; or

(ii) Minimum content standards in accordance with EPA's Recovered Materials Advisory Notices; and

(2) For biobased products, that the product is composed of—

(i) The highest percentage of biobased material practicable; or

(ii) USDA's recommended minimum contents standards.

(e) Agencies shall treat as eligible for the preference for biobased products,